Import of hazardous waste

1907. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of hazardous waste imported in India each year during last five years;

(b) the nature of such hazardous waste;

(c) the reasons for importing hazardous waste;

(d) the names and quantity of hazardous waste imported from each country;

(e) the States and places where the hazardous waste is dumped; and

(f) what is the broad policy of Government of import of such wastes?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (e) The information is being collected from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(f) The policy of Government is reflected in the Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules (HW Rules) notified in 1989 and amended in 2000 and 2003. Import of hazardous wastes for dumping or disposal purpose in not permitted, while some identified wastes listed under Schedule 3 of the HW Rules can be imported for recycling/ reuse purposes under regulated conditions. Import of certain highly hazardous wastes listed under Schedule 8 of the HW Rules is totally prohibited even for recycling/reuse. The basic principle of regulating the import of hazardous wastes is also reflected in the Exim Policy of Government.

Importers of chemical wastes

1908. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some traders are freely engaged in importing restricted/ banned hazardous wastes without valid permission;

(b) if so, the list of importers of chemical wastes registered with the Ministry; and

(c) number of complaints received against such erring importers and action taken during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The import of hazardous wastes is strictly regulated by Government through the Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules(HW Rules) notified in 1989 as amended in 2000 and 2003 and through the EXIM Policy of the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT). Under the provisions of the HW Rules and the EXIM Policy, no hazardous wastes can be imported into the country without valid permission from Government.

(b) Used oil and twenty-two identified non-ferrous metal wastes specified under Schedule 4 of the HW Rules, can be imported by actual users having environmentally sound management facilities for reprocessing such wastes and registered with the Ministry of Environment and Forests/Central Pollution Control Board under the Registration Scheme. A total of 277 units have been granted registration till date.

(c) All the State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees have been advised to initiate action against units involved in illegal imports of hazardous wastes in violation of laid down procedures, as prescribed under the HW Rules.

Sand mining on the river beds

1909. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sand mining on the river beds is rampant in the country, particularly in Kerala;

(b) if so, whether such activities causes the depletion of the water levels of these rivers;

(c) whether such depletion in the water levels cause the saline ocean water entering to the fresh water rivers;